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Sent: Monday, January 29, 2018 11:28 AM
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Subject: follow-up on testimony re: Early Learning Challenge accomplishments

Dear Senator Sharpe and Representative Pugh,

Thank you again for the opportunity to present the strategic accomplishments of the Early Learning Challenge grant to you and your committees last Thursday. Here are a few additional resources and follow-up items, based on the questions we received:

1. Here is the link to the VELS standards that Kate Rogers discussed:
<http://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-early-education-early-learning-standards.pdf>
2. Here is the link for the description of the Women's Health Initiative, as one community based strategy to address substance use disorder in pregnancy:
<http://blueprintforhealth.vermont.gov/about-blueprint/womens-health-initiative>.
3. We would welcome the opportunity to talk with the committees further about Vermont's system of care for substance exposed pregnancies.
4. Head Start's involvement has been quite robust, and we didn't do it justice on Thursday, so I wanted to expand on the points we made at the testimony.
 - a. Many of the structural, systems-level improvements that we described at yesterday's testimony were informed by and aligned with Head Start standards and services. Examples are: the revised Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS); Vermont's Comprehensive Early Childhood Assessment System; the revised Kindergarten Readiness Survey (now R4K!S); and the PreK Monitoring System.
 - b. As an important component of an integrated early care and learning system in Vermont, Head Start programs and Head Start staff have been participants in all of the professional development and program quality improvement efforts of the grant including Vermont STARS, Specialized Child Care Services, Early Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, TEACH, Apprenticeship, Strengthening Families Framework and grants, and the Summer Institute.
 - c. Head Start is represented on the Building Bright Futures Statewide Advisory Council (BBF SAC). The Vermont Head Start Association representative, Betsy Rathbun-Gunn of Bennington, is currently a Co-Chair and has been over the past several years as the BBF SAC has served as an Advisory Group to the Early Learning Challenge Grant
 - d. In regions and communities throughout Vermont, Head Start participates on regional Building Bright Futures councils, and many Head Start grantees participated in local Promise Community planning and implementation.

e. The Director of the Vermont Head Start State Collaboration Office was part of the writing team that created the successful Early Learning Challenge grant application, and serves on the statewide advisory council for the grant, and plays an active role in prenatal – Grade 12 Data Governance work. As part of an Early Challenge Grant project, data from Head Start grantees will be incorporated into AOE’s State Longitudinal Data System.

It was a pleasure to share highlights of the grant with you. Please let me know if there is other information that would be helpful to you.

We appreciate your ongoing support and hard work on behalf of young children and families.

Julie

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